

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising: [[of]] generating identification information relating to identifying a network component [[of]] connected to a computer network, the network component having an associated a memory storing a first set of data items relating to the network component, said generating comprising the network component retrieving one or more of said first set of data items from said associated memory and generating said identifying identification information from said retrieved data items.
2. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said identification information is generated in a first network component in response to a request from a network management application program running in a second network component.
3. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the method further comprises retrieving further data from a further memory associated with said first network component or with another network component, and adding said further data as a suffix or prefix to said retrieved data to generate said identifying information.
4. (Original) A method according to claim 2 wherein said generated identification information is sent from said first network component to said second network component.
5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein said associated memory is an ID PROM, and said first set of data items includes at least one of a manufacturer's part number, a serial number, and an equipment type descriptor.
6. (Canceled).

7. (Currently Amended) A method comprising: [[of]] operating a computer network including a first network component and a second network component linked to the first network component by a communication network, the second network component being operable to perform a network management application wherein a request for identification information identifying the first network component is sent via the communications network to the first network component, and wherein the first network component provides identification information in response to such a request by retrieving one or more data items from a first set of data items stored in a memory associated with of said first network component, generating said identification information from said retrieved data items, and sending said generated identification information to said second network component via said communications network.

8. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein the step of generating said identification information comprises adding said retrieved data item or items as a suffix or prefix to data items stored in a further memory of said first network component.

9. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein said first network component is a sub-system of a third network component, and the step of generating said identification information comprises adding said retrieved data item or items as a suffix or prefix to data items stored in a memory of said third network component.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein said first set of data items comprises at least one of a manufacturer's part number, a type descriptor, and a serial number.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein said memory associated with said first network component comprises an ID PROM.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein identification information received by the second network component is compared with management information data stored in a memory in said second network component.

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 7 further comprising extracting from a database of product information data corresponding to a description of an item of equipment and data corresponding to said first data items relating to said equipment, generating identifying information from said first data items, and storing a correlation between said generated identifying information and said data corresponding to said description.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (New) A computer network component comprising: a processor; and a memory wherein the memory stores instructions executable by the processor to generate identification information identifying the computer network component, the computer network component having a memory storing a first set of data items relating to the computer network component, said generating comprising the computer network component retrieving one or more of said first set of data items from said memory and generating said identification information from said retrieved data items.

17. (New) The computer network component according to claim 16, wherein said memory is an ID PROM, and said first set of data items includes at least one of a manufacturer's part number, a serial number, and an equipment type descriptor.

18. (New) The computer network component according to claim 16, wherein the computer network component is configured to generate said identification information responsive to a request from a network management application running on another component connected to said computer network.

19. (New) A computer network comprising:
  - a first network component coupled to the computer network, the first network component including a memory;
  - a second network component coupled to the computer network, wherein the second network component is configured to perform a network management application, wherein performing the network management application includes sending a request for identification information to the first network component;

wherein the first network component is configured to, responsive to receiving the request, retrieve one or more data items from a set of data items stored in the memory, generate said identification information from said retrieved data items, and send said generated identification information to said second network component via said computer network, wherein said identification information identifies the first network component.
20. (New) The computer network as recited in claim 19, wherein said memory is an ID PROM, and said set of data items includes at least one of a manufacturer's part number, a serial number, and an equipment type descriptor of the first network component.
21. (New) The computer network as recited in claim 18, wherein the second network component is configured to compare identification information received from the first network component with management information data stored in a memory of said second network component.